

Message Text

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APPROVED BY MR. TARNOFF

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

FOL RPT ROME 0191 SENT ACTION SECSTATE DTD 05 JAN 78

QUOTE: S E C R E T ROME 0191

NODIS

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SUBJECT: RECOMMENDED INITIATIVES ON ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: ROME 0062

1. IN THE REFERENCED MESSAGE, I RECOMMENDED THAT THE PRESIDENT
MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SITUATION
THAT LEAVES NO DOUBT THAT THE US FIRMLY OPPOSES FURTHER
ENLARGEMENT OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S ROLE IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.
THIS MESSAGE OUTLINES ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES THAT I BELIEVE SHOULD
BE TAKEN TO REINFORCE OUR POSITION AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN

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THE POLITICAL PROCESS HERE.

2. LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT. TO UNDERScore OUR CONCERN WITH THE
DRIFT OF EVENTS IN ITALY TOWARD FURTHER ACCOMMODATION OF THE PCI,
I RECOMMEND THAT THE PRESIDENT'S PUBLIC STATEMENT BE COMPLEMENTED
BY A LETTER FROM HIM TO PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI (WHICH COULD
BE SHOWN TO OTHER SELECTED DC LEADERS). THE LETTER WOULD NECESSARILY

AVOID ANY SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO VARIOUS GOVERNMENT FORMULAE (SUCH AS PCI PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNING PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY) NOW BEING CONSIDERED, BUT WOULD MAKE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR OUR OPPOSITION TO "ANY STEP THAT BRINGS THE COMMUNIST PARTY FURTHER INTO THE GOVERNING PROCESS." PROPOSED TEXT FOLLOWS:

DEAR MR. PRIME MINISTER:

I HAVE RECENTLY RETURNED FROM AN ARDOUS BUT HOPEFUL JOURNEY THAT HAS TAKEN ME TO THREE CONTINENTS. I RETURN CONVINCED THAT WITH GOOD WILL AND PATIENT EFFORT, GREATER COOPERATION AND UNDERSTANDING CAN BE ACHIEVED BETWEEN EAST AND WEST, JEW AND ARAB, AND BETWEEN THE INDUSTRIALIZED AND DEVELOPING WORLDS. FOLLOWING MY MEETING WITH THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL, I WAS ALSO STRUCK ONCE AGAIN BY THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF THE NATO ALLIANCE IN SAFEGUARDING OUR COMMON SECURITY AND WELL-BEING. OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE, I AM IMPRESSED BY THE VITALITY OF NATO AS THE POLITICAL EXPRESSION OF SOVEREIGN ALLIES SHARING COMMON WESTERN VALUES AND IDEALS.

IN THE SPIRIT OF A CLOSE FRIEND AND ALLY, I AM PROMPTED TO WRITE TO YOU OF MY CONCERNS ABOUT THE APPARENT TREND OF EVENTS IN ITALY. AS YOU KNOW FROM YOUR VISIT TO WASHINGTON IN JULY, MY GOVERNMENT AND I HAVE A DEEP INTEREST IN THE WELL-BEING OF ITALY AND THE CONCOMITANT VITALITY OF ITS DEMOCRATIC FORCES. IT IS MY SINCERE HOPE THAT ITALIAN DEMOCRACY CAN BE STRENGTHENED AND REINVIGORATED TO PREVENT THE FURTHER GROWTH OF COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN YOUR COUNTRY. IT IS OF COURSE NOT THE INTENTION OF THE UNITED
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STATES TO TRY TO CONDITION EVENTS IN ITALY. AS I HAVE SAID MANY TIMES, AND MOST RECENTLY AT -----, THE DECISION ON HOW ITALY IS GOVERNED RIGHTLY RESTS IN THE ITALIAN PEOPLE ALONE.

I FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAT OUR VIEWS ON THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENTS OF OUR ALLIES BE UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR. WHILE THE DECISION IS CERTAINLY ONE FOR THE ITALIAN PEOPLE TO TAKE, OUR INTERESTS CANNOT BUT BE PROFOUNDLY AFFECTED

BY THE CHOICE. ALTHOUGH MEMBERS OF MY ADMINISTRATION AND I HAVE STATED ON MANY OCCASIONS THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT REMAINS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN WESTERN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS, I AM CONCERNED THAT THE COMMUNISTS AND OTHERS HAVE SOUGHT TO CREATE DOUBTS AND AMBIGUITIES ON OUR POSITION. I THEREFORE FELT IT NECESSARY TO REITERATE THESE VIEWS VERY CLEARLY WHEN I WAS ASKED ABOUT OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN ITALY DURING MY PRESS CONFERENCE IN -----.

IN THE SAME SPIRIT OF FRANKNESS AND SINCERITY THAT CHARACTERIZED OUR MEETINGS LAST JULY, I WOULD BE REMISS IN NOT STRESSING TO YOU MY BELIEF THAT ANY STEP WHICH BRINGS THE COMMUNIST PARTY FURTHER INTO THE GOVERNING PROCESS WOULD HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON OUR BILATERAL

RELATIONS. MOREOVER, INCREASING THE DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION BY THE

COMMUNIST PARTY IN YOUR GOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES CANNOT BUT HAVE A PROFOUND AND NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE NATO ALLIANCE. SUCH A COURSE WOULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD BY PUBLIC OPINION IN THE UNITED STATES. IN PARTICULAR, IT WOULD DEEPLY TROUBLE THE CONGRESS AND THE PRESS. I SINCERELY HOPE THAT SUCH A DEVELOPMENT, WHICH I BELIEVE WOULD BE TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF BOTH OF OUR COUNTRIES, CAN BE AVOIDED. SINCERELY YOURS,
JIMMY CARTER

3. SUPPORT OF CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS AND THE ITALIAN-AMERICAN CAUCUS. GIVEN THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION, I WOULD URGE THAT THE APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES AND LEADERS BE THOROUGHLY BRIEFED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN ADDITION, DRAWING ON ANDREOTTI'S OWN SUGGESTION TO ME, THE ITALIAN-AMERICAN CAUCUS COULD BE ENCOURAGED TO REVIEW
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THE SITUATION AND ISSUE A PRESS STATEMENT WARNING OF STRONGLY NEGATIVE REACTION, PARTICULARLY AMONG ITALIAN AMERICANS, TO FURTHER ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PCI. (PETER RODINO AND FRANK ANNUNZIO ARE OBVIOUS POINTS OF CONTACT.) ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS COULD BE SOUGHT FROM OTHER INFLUENTIAL CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS SUCH AS SPEAKER O'NEILL.

4. ALLIED SUPPORT. I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD ALSO SEEK (1) TO ENCOURAGE THE MAJOR ALLIES TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO STIFFEN THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT, AND (2) TO MOBILIZE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIALIST PARTIES IN WESTERN EUROPE TO PRESS THEIR SISTER ITALIAN PARTIES NOT TO MAKE FURTHER COMPROMISES WITH THE PCI. COMMENT: IN THIS CONNECTION, I HAVE A LUNCH SCHEDULED ON JANUARY 12 WITH THE AMBASSADORS OF BRITAIN, FRANCE, GERMANY, JAPAN, AND CANADA. I WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO THIS PROPOSAL TO HELP GUIDE ME IN MY CONVERSATIONS WITH MY COLLEAGUES.

5. OF COURSE, IN OUR CONVERSATIONS HERE WITH SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND LEADERS OF THE DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTIES, MY COLLEAGUES IN THE MISSION AND I WILL CONTINUE TO STRESS OUR PROFOUND CONCERN OVER THE TREND TOWARD FURTHER ACCOMMODATION WITH THE PCI AND OUR OPPOSITION TO ANY STEP THAT BRINGS THE PCI FURTHER INTO THE GOVERNING PROCESS. GARDNER UNQUOTE
CHRISTOPHER

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